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ABSTRACT

While it is generally agreed that peace is desirable, there are barriers to achieving a peaceful world. These barriers are classified into three major areas: (1) an erroneous view of human nature; (2) injustice; and (3) fear of world unity. In a discussion of these barriers, it is noted that although the consciousness and conscience of the world is developing to the point where it will no longer tolerate violence and injustice, fear of world government is deeply felt and is almost universal. The role of education in overcoming these fears and barriers to peace are discussed. The history of education is described as an evolving process of teaching ever-expanding concepts of citizenship and knowledge. Examples are given of models that may serve as guides to developing, through education, the means of overcoming resistance to the avenues that will lead to world peace. The United Nations is cited as an example of world cooperation, and the federation of states in the United States is proposed as a political model for world unity. The Baha'i international community is given as a model of a system of education that promotes understanding and peaceful co-existence. (JD)

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ACHIEVING PEACE THROUGH EDUCATION

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Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe. H. G. Wells

War threatens the very survival of life on earth. Education and catastrophe are in a race for which the destiny of the world hangs in the balance. If catastrophe should prove to be the victor, the prize may be the extinction of man, but if education can overcome the negative and outworn ideas that have entrapped the world, the prize will be a new world civilization. Catastrophe has a strong lead as we rush headlong into what promises to the most destructive and probably the final major self-inflicted holocaust of man.

How can we change this world that seems to bent on destroying itself into a world of peace and brotherhood? The answer goes far beyond the banning of nuclear weapons or the signing of treaties. It will require a more fundamental change, a change in the minds and hearts of mankind.

War is a disease in the body of humanity. Until we are prepared to deal with the true causes of this disease, injustice and disunity, no true healing will occur. Even though the symptoms appear to wax and wane, the patient is in critical condition, but its condition is not hopeless.

The world is filled with wars and conflicts over misguided religious beliefs, unbridled nationalism, cancerous materialism and anachronistic prejudices. Some, viewing the present state of affairs, have abandoned hope that education has a chance of averting the natural consequences of the injustice and disunity that exist in our world today. Others care, but have no idea about how to change this world of war into a world of peace or how education can overcome catastrophe. Still others attempt solutions that are neither broad enough nor deep enough to bring about the necessary transformation.

If we look at history, we are presented with a dismal prospect of a peaceful world. Yet the philosophers, scientists, leaders of thought, the common man and even the political leaders who wage wars, all agree that war is destructive and peace is constructive, war is evil and peace is good, war is death and peace is life.

If the leaders and people all agree that peace is desirable, why have we not been able to achieve this goal? There are barriers between us and peace. Our achieving a peaceful world will depend on our properly understanding those barriers and on our ablility to remove them.

Barriers to Peace

The barriers to peace can be classified into three major areas: 1) erroneous view of human nature, 2) injustice, 3) and fear of world unity.

Erroneous View of Human Nature

This barrier is considerd first because until people believe that peace is possible, all attempts at peace will be frustrated.

It is said that man has always had wars, will always have wars and is inherently selfish and aggressive. These doubts and misconceptions must be examined, because without resolving them, our hopes and efforts for building a peaceful world will be paralyzed. If we feel the condition of the world is hopeless, then we will not make an effort to save it. That course of action may result in the extinction of the human race and the annihilation of all life on the planet earth.

If we take a developmental view of mankind through history, we will have a framework for understanding why, even though our past has been filled with wars, our present stage of development should be characterized by peace. In much the same way that individuals go through successive stages of growth and development, mankind has gone through the stages of infancy, childhood, and adolescence, and is now entering the stage of adulthood.

The aggressive and selfish qualities that characterized our earlier stages of development must be cast aside for the more mature qualities of cooperation and reciprocity that are characteristic of the adult level of development. Understanding history according to the developmental view of the human race should assist us in our process of transforming this immature world of conflict and egocentrism into a world of peace and unity. Just because we acted childish and adolescent in earlier times, does not mean we are destined to act like that forever. The world has grown and developed, and so must the world's response to the needs and exigencies of this day.

The consciousness and conscience of the world is developing to the point where it will no longer tolerate the violence, destruction, and insanity of war. This growth in awareness and concern on the part of humanity has developed rapidly, but not fast enough to keep up with the scientific and technological advances of our times. War and aggression have been with us throughout history, but the general sense that such things are not acceptable is a recent development. Never in the past has mankind expressed the type of outrage we presently see toward the injustice and violence of our age. These things are not new, but our consciousness and conscience about them are. The growth of peace movements, the general publics awareness and concern for social justice, and the advances made in world unity and order are all signs of the coming of age of mankind.

World peace is imminent. It is the hallmark of humanity's adulthood. The process by which we reach this level of development is yet to be seen. The options range from continuing our present adolescent behavior in a world of adult technology and responsibilities until we destroy most of the world, or to consciously respond to the needs and concerns of the world in a more mature fashion which will bring about the justice and peace for which we are all longing. Education can play a role in assisting humanity to make the right choice by teaching how peace can be achieved.

Injustices

Before there can be peace, there must be unity, and before there can be unity, there must be justice. We do not often connect the injustices that exist in our world with the cause of peace, but until these injustices are adequately dealt with, the world unity necessary for peace will not come about.

The most important injustices that must be overcome in our efforts to avert catastrophe are racism, nationalism, economic injustice, sexism, and religious prejudice. Most leaders of thought recognize that these injustices are wrong, but we have yet to extract ourselves from the centuries of ingrained social habits, attitudes, and institutions that support and propagate these injustices.

Racism is one of the worst and longest standing of these injustices. Progress in eliminating this evil has been made during the past few decades. The current outrage concerning racist practices in the world is a sign of this growing awareness. Racist policies and practices which have been in existence for centuries have largely been discredited in this day and laws and institutions have been established to overcome the past inequities. Racism not only harms those who are oppressed by it, but also has a deleterious affect on the oppressors. It divides humanity unjustly without scientific foundation and leads to conflict.

The second structure and attitude that must be adjusted is that of excessive nationalism. Nationalistic practices that were acceptable and necessary previously, are dangerous and inappropriate at this stage of development. Through advances in science and technology, particularly in transportation and communications, the planet has become a global village. Every nation is connected and interdependent with every other nation. Indeed, the very concept of nationhood must be called into question in this age when the changing conditions require a world view and cooperation, rather than the current antagonistic and self-centered approaches.

Economic injustice is another social barrier to peace. The inequities that presently exist between haves and have nots create a condition that is unlikely to allow peace. The extremes of wealth and poverty create instability, suffering and injustice on a level that is unacceptable. We cannot expect the poor of the world to passively sit by without food and the basic necessities while the rich have more than they need or can use.

The fourth social structure that creates a barrier to peace is sexism. Sexism is an injustice toward one-half of the world's population that is being eradicated much too slowly. Only as women are accepted into full partnership with men will the attitudes of society be more balanced to allow the consciousness of peace to emerge.

The final major social injustice that must be overcome in our effort for peace is that of religious fanaticism and intolerance. It is interesting that the very religious institutions which profess love and brotherhood have been the cause of so much hatred, disunity, and war. Religion, which has been a tremendous motivating force in the development of

civilizations, can, if stripped of its acquired prejudices, become a strong motivating force for peace and unity.

Fear of World Unity

The fear of world unity takes on many forms. World unity will require a world government, and many people are afraid that such a government will not be to their liking. Other fears include the fear of losing individuality, freedom and current advantages.

World government is scary to people for several reasons. First of all people do not know what to expect. This fear of the unknown is natural, but certainly no reason not to act. There are many prejudice about a world government that will need to be dealt with. The fact remains that we can not maintain world peace without world government. These same fears existed when the nations first started their federal unions, but few people today would argue the benefits that have resulted from these unions.

The fear of losing our freedom, individuality, or current advantages are also legitimate concerns that must be addressed. By involving the people in consultation about the need for peace and the process of achieving world unity, we can overcome these fears. By creating a united and peaceful world, freedom, individuality, and advantages should increase for everyone. The same protections that are used to keep federated nations from excessive centralization, bureaucratization and conformity can be employed to insure that each nation would not only retain its autonomy, the loyalty of its citizens, its identity and economic security, but that these areas would be enriched.

Education for Peace

How can education help to remove these barriers to peace? Very simply, by teaching the truth. Instead of teaching a misleading view of human nature, we can teach the evolving nature of human development and history. Instead of promoting one race over another, one nation over another, one class over another, one sex over another, or one religion over another, we can raise the consciousness and conscience of our students to the point injustice will be intolerable. We can teach world unity instead of world divisiveness, peace instead of war, love instead of hate, cooperation instead of antagonism, and peaceful resolution of problems instead of violent confrontation. Human history and the social development of man can be taught as a process of creating ever-expanding levels of justice and unity.

The history of education can also be seen as an evolving process of teaching ever-expanding concepts of citizenship and knowledge. In primitive times, citizenship education was confined to the family, clan, or tribe. Education during Greek civilization encouraged loyalty to the city-state. Succeeding periods ushered in and established nation-states and educational systems designed to serve the citizenship and knowledge needs of those states. We are now at the point of world-statehood and our educational systems and curricula must be adapted to meet the needs of this day.

Education as it presently exists, promotes war instead of peace, pits white against black, haves against have nots, one nation against nation, boys against girls, and believers angainst non-believers. We cannot expect a world of peace to result from this type of education. These prejudices and practices, like war, are supported by lies, irrationalities, fear and ignorance with which we have entrapped ourselves. They are supported by fear and ignorance. We must teach the fallacies and harmful effects of these prejudices and injustices if we are to further accelerate the needed change in attitude. This education can give us the knowledge and courage to change from our present destructive practices to more constructive ones.

Education can no longer serve the selfish interests of one group over another. Even the rhetoric behind improving education is based on increasing one group's ability to best another group economically, militarily, or in some other way. This attitude is evident from many of the national reports and statements by national leaders on education in recent years. Not only are educational systems designed to encourage the development of one racial, national, economic, sexual, or religious group over another, but the curriculum also reflects this bias. We must encourage more cooperation and consultation in the schools.

We must first extricate ourselves, as individuals, from the prejudices and injustices that keep us from peace. It is often easy to sign petitions, participate in demonstrations, or even to teach what is right, but much more difficult to eradicate our own harmful attitudes and practices. Only when we have successfully dealt with these problems within ourselves, will we be able to positively influence our students.

Our present systems of education propagate social injustice and prejudice. For example, teachers from the Soviet Union and the United States were given the opportunity to criticizé each other's textbooks. Their report stated that both nations' texts "are self-serving, ideological, erroneous in part, stress differences between the two countries and are guided by cold war points of view" (Nagler, 1983, p.108). The depicting of other nations, races, classes, religions and of females in our school texts and our literature is also an example of how schools reinforce society's prejudices.

Education must also deal with the fear of world unity and world government. One way to eliminate this fear is to understand the need for peace and the way peace can be achieved without sacrificing our freedoms, rights and welfare. Through education we can empower the next generation to overcome the forces that threaten to destroy this planet. The only prevention of world war is world unity. In 1946, Einstein accurately diagnosed the condition of the world and prescribed its remedy in the following statement:

> Often in evolutionary processes a species must adapt to new conditions in order to survive. Today, the atomic bomb has altered profoundly the nature of the world as we know it, and the human race consequently finds itself in a new habitat to which it must adapt its thinking... In the light of new knowledge, a world authority and an eventual world state

> are not just desirable in the name of brotherhood, they are necessary for survival. In previous ages a nation's life and culture could be protected to some extent by the growth of armies in national competition. Today we must abandon competition and secure cooperation. This must be the central fact in all our considerations of international affairs; otherwise we face certain disaster. Past thinking and methods did not prevent world wars. Future thinking must prevent wars. (p. 137)

If education has no higher purpose than to propagate the outworn ideologies and prejudices of our time, then history will record the victory of catastrophe over education in this age. Teachers who fail to teach the principles of justice, unity and peace will not only fail themselves individually, but will also fail the students they teach and the society and profession they serve. They may also fail the entire human race if they do not arise to play their part.

Many people are concerned about the condition of education and teaching. Promoting education for peace could do a great deal to revitalize them. By focusing our energies on the redeeming moral and social aspects of education, we can awaken the energy in both ourselves and our students to create a better world for all. Education which has always played a role in preparing young people for war, can be used equally well to prepare our youth for peace.

One of the most important immediate goals and purposes of education is to teach world citizenship. This education would enable students' visions to be world-embracing rather than focused on selfish goals which do not lead to true personal fulfillment or happiness. The modern 'meism' and materialism are productive to neither the individual nor the society.

Education for world citizenship should include an appreciation of the rights and diversity of all humanity; an acceptance of the oneness of mankind, as the sciences of biology, psychology, and anthropology demonstrate; and a correcting the many prejudices existing in our curricula. Such an education should be universal, compulsory, have a curriculum for all the peoples of the world, and eliminate unfair discriminatory practices.

The technological advances in the field of communications and instruction must be used for the education of all peoples. By developing an international curriculum, a much more balanced view of the world and its peoples would be achieved. The curriculum could be developed in consultation with experts from throughout the world. This procedure would further insure a balanced and accurate curriculum. This plan should not promote conformity, but rather unity in diversity. The various colors, cultures, and characteristics of the people should be viewed in their proper perspective as enriching humanity and a vital source for its continued development.

We should also concern ourselves with the informal education we receive through the media. It is estimated that children in the more developed countries of the world have seen over 20,000 acts of brutal violence on television. Our environment plays an important role in shaping our attitudes and values and can not be

forgotten in our attempts to create a peaceful society. The messages conveyed by the media support the erroneous views and prejudices which lead to war.

Another important ingredient in this process of world education is the adoption of a universal auxiliary language that everyone would learn besides their mother tongue. A world language would facilitate a world curriculum, literature and system of education. It would allow all peoples to communicate with one another and would be a unifying factor to promote peace and understanding.

Models for Study

The choice before mankind is whether to continue with our present attitudes and behavior towards a catastrophe of such magnitude as the world has never seen, nor will ever see again, or to develop attitudes and behaviors that will lead us to justice, unity and peace. The first step in this process is to establish a minimum acceptable level of justice, especially in the key areas of race, international relations, economics, gender, and religion. The vital necessity of creating a world federal unit can not be overlooked as this will be the author and upholder of world peace. The part that education can play should not be underestimated, for in the balance lies the future of humanity.

Several models exist that serve to guide us in our attempts to understand and plan for peace.

World Order Models

One of the most logical places to look for a model of world unity and peace is to existing institutions and organizations that have been established to promote world order. The United Nations Organization is the most obvious and developed institution dedicated to world peace. Like its predecessor, the League of Nations, it was created after a destructive world war in an attempt to avoid future wars. Unfortunately, neither organization was successful in its mission of peace, but they have laid the groundwork for establishing a peaceful world. The organizations, agreements, and information produced by the United Nations have moved the world closer to cooperation and have created a vision of justice, unity, and peace for the peoples of the world.

The United Nations is also a valuable model for learning why it has not been able to accomplish peace. We can learn from its deficiencies what adjustments will need to be made to make an effective agency for world peace. It is clear that whatever agency is formed, it must have the power to keep peace in the world.

A number of proposals exist that are designed to outline the needed structure and laws for eliminating war. These documents can be studied and used by the governments of the world in their efforts to build a peaceful world. Some examples of these efforts are the World Order Models Project, A Constitution for the World, World Peace Through World Law, and Constitution for

the Federation of Earth.

On a smaller scale we see many groups of nations cooperating on matters of mutual concern, such as the Caribbean Community and Common Market, the European Communities, and the many other organizations for regional cooperation. These limited alliances offer models that can be built upon and expanded to include the entire world.

Federal Model

The federal system of government is another model we can look to for an understanding of how world peace can be established. Most of the large nations of the world, as well as many of the smaller nations, use federated systems to govern their countries. These systems demonstrate how large numbers of different peoples can work together cooperatively. The many benefits of federalism to the member states is evident in the nations which employ this practice.

The original thirteen colonies of the United States of America can also serve as a model. After the Revolutionary War and gaining independence from Britain, the colonies were highly autonomous with each state having its own independent government, laws, and economies. By forming a federal union which gave power to the federal government to regulate the affairs between member states, the colonies were able to prosper in a constructive and peaceful fashion. One of the powers given to the federal unit was the power to wage war. The same benefits that resulted from the union of those independent states into one federated nation can also result from a world-wide federation. The same protections used by these nation to secure the freedom and rights of its citizens can be employed in the federation of the world.

Baha'i Model

A third model for study is the Baha'i international community. This community is a religious group of some three to four million people from every race, nation, class, and religion. They have established intitutions and communities dedicatied to creating social justice, unity and peace. These institutions and communities are functioning worldwide on both the grassroots and international level. They have created not only the consciousness and conscience of peace, but they are also putting these ideals into day-to-day practice all over the world from the least developed rural areas to the most developed urban centers, involving all levels of society from a rich diversity of backgrounds.

On the grassroots level, local communities have made tremendous strides in removing the barriers to peace. Social and economic development are encouraged and local governing institutions are created to administer the affairs of the community with justice. Consultation is employed to reach decisions affecting the community. The distinctions of race, nationality, sex, and class are systematically removed from both the individual and the community through a process of education. This education happens on both the formal and informal levels through such things as classes for children and adults and through social interaction and practice of the Baha'i teachings.

On an international level, these communities are bound together by institutions that maintain international unity and encourage the development of a new world order. It has been successful in creating an embryonic system that provides the necessary elements for world peace and unity.

Educational Models

What models exist that may be used to better understand education's role in helping to establish peace?

Using education to promote justice and unity, the foundations of peace, is not new. Most nations of the world have used their educational systems to promote national citizenship, based upon a sense of national loyalty and consciousness. The nations have seen this as necessary for their peoples to live together harmoniously and to improve the condition of their countries. Few would argue its influence and benefits. The development of education in the United States is an example of a country taking many diverse peoples and creating a unified nation. We can learn from the successes and failures of the nations of the world in creating national identity and citizenship. This education should be based on the principles of justice and unity, and should be applied on a world-wide basis to develop world citizenship; otherwise the planet will suffer the dissolution and destruction that nations have suffered who failed to create a minimal level of national citizenship.

In every nation of the world a structure of education has already been established that can create the foundation for a worldwide effort to establish social justice, unity and peace. One of the first steps towards improving that system would to be to reduce the inequities that exist in educational opportunity. The history of education can be seen as a gradual process of the races, religions, classes, sexes, and ethnic groups achieving greater and greater equity of educational opportunity. We must consciously move this process towards its final stage of equal opportunity for all peoples.

We must also look for models of curriculum and instruction that further the concepts of justice, unity and peace. Materials and practices that view man as a cooperative and evolving being, that eliminate prejudice and injustice, and that foster world citizenship should be more and more employed in the classrooms. Consultation on the solving of world, local and individual problems must become part of our curriculum.

The International Council on Education for Teaching may serve as an embryonic model of world cooperation among educators. Such an organization, because of its international nature, could play a leadership role ushering in the next stage of the history of education; an international cooperative endeavor for creating a worldwide system of education.

Conclusion

Peace is more than a cessation of war. It is an attitude that must be supported by justice and unity. Many people's efforts for peace are aimed at banning or limiting nuclear weapons. Such efforts, however praiseworthy, are not able to

prevent war, let alone create peace. War existed for centuries before the creation of nuclear weapons and would continue regardless of whether nuclear weapons were banned or limited. Assuming such a ban or limitation were enforcable, which is highly unlikely considering the ineffectiveness of past bans and arms limitations, the nations would only invent new and potentially more dangerous weapons. There already exists chemical and germ weapons that threaten all life. Peace has more to do with raising the consciousness and conscience of the people than with the signing of treaties or the limiting of arms. Education, both formal and informal, is the best means for creating the knowledge and attitude needed for peace.

The process of establishing peace in the world is primarily a process of changing how we think about peace, which will affect how we feel about peace, and ultimately guide our actions towards creating peace. To psychically assault our students with the unimaginable suffering and cruelty of another world war may only lead to depression and repression. Such negative reinforcement alone has not prevented wars of the past and will not prevent future wars. The steadily deteriorating conditions of our world may awaken us to the bankruptcy of current ideologies and customs and cause us to more seriously consider the need for peace, but it may also cause an immobilization of will as the inability of the present structures to solve the problems facing us becomes more apparent. If the students understood the causes of our present predicament and the role they could play in improving it, they would be better prepared to bring about the needed changes. To expose our students to the present dangers without giving them realistic hope will destroy their will to work for peace.

Peace will not ultimately be established by education alone. Education can help to create the consciousness and conscience needed for peace. This new level of understanding and concern will lead the governments of the world to sit down together to draw up a plan for peace that will be accepted throughout the planet.

Even if education does not win the present race with catastrophe, we must do the most we can, for until the peoples of the world are educated, no real progress will result. Had the leaders and people been properly educated, we could have created the necessary institutions for maintaining world peace after World War I or II, but we clung to our outmoded patterns of behavior and prejudices. If there is another world war, let us hope that we have done our part in educating humanity for peace, so that if anyone is left in the world, they will have the resolve and knowledge to create peace at that time.

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